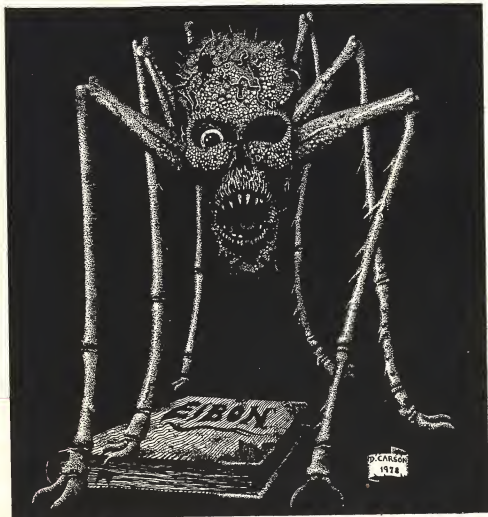


DARK HORIZONS



Issue No. 23

Summer 1981

60p/\$2.50

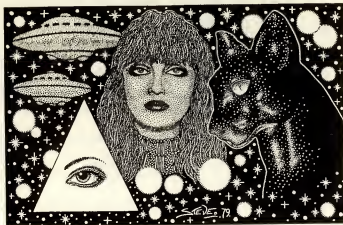
DARK HORIZONS

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY CONTENTS

ILLUMINATION, by DAVID SUTTON	2
(Editorial)	
THE TERROR FILM CAREER OF PETE WALKER, by ALAN JONES	3
(Exploitation film director examined)	
THE CHENNAUT, by RICHARD SMITH	7
(Verse)	
THE INVISIBLE PRINCE, by DAVID SUTTON	8
(The eloquence of Le Fanu's short stories)	
THE GREEN MAN SPEAKS, by JON BYE	13
(Verse)	
LES FLEURS, by TOM LIGOTTI	14
(Fiction)	
IF IT'S WEDNESDAY THIS MUST BE NARNIA, by Andrew J. Wilson	19
(Exploring the links between phantasy and reality)	
DARK GODDESS: AN APPRECIATION OF NICO, by Peter J. Relton	24
(Singer/songwriter of fantasy)	
WORDS OF MAGIC, by Peter Bayliss	28
(Lore on magick words)	
MOORCOCK MEMORABILIA, by ANDREW DARLINGTON	31
(Pastiche and Pseudonym ephemera)	
ARTWORK CREDITS: Front Cover by, <u>DAVE CARSON</u> . Page 2 by, <u>STEPHEN JONES</u> . Page 9 (illustrating "green Tea") and page 11 (illustrating "Carnilla") by, <u>ALAN HUNTER</u> . Page 16 by, <u>ALAN HUNTER</u> , as is page 31. The BFS logo design and page 18 by <u>RUSS NICHOLSON</u>	

Please turn to page 27 for publishing information.

ILLUMINATION



DARK HORIZONS is at the present time the only magazine in the U.K. which contains articles about different aspects of the Fantasy genre. The question to then ask is, does it do that job effectively? Well, not entirely, though to be fair the magazine has had two problem years followed by two further years trying to re-establish credibility under John Merritt and Mike Chinn. Their work can be commended, but at the same time I feel that Dark Horizons has still perpetuated a myth. It is that the magazine should be a balanced fiction/fact journal. Personally I feel that fiction should not be as presumptuous as it has been these last few years.

Consequently, under my editorship, Dark Horizons will emphasise literate and interesting articles about books, writers, films, film-makers, art, artists, music and even the occult. Stories and verse will take a back seat, though not be entirely absent from these pages. (And because there will be less it shouldn't be assumed that what is used will be lacking in quality!) The aim is to supply you with thoughtful, amusing, serious, informative DH's. A lively letters column is hoped for to provide a counterpoint to the contributors - you may after all disagree with something and wish to 'set things straight' or in agreeing you might lend further evidence in support of a contributor's point of view. There is no letters column in this issue, entirely due to the neglect of the

readers, and not to lack of space! Can I therefore encourage you to write in and comment, not only on the issue you now hold, but on the previous DH - I'm sure both Mike Chinn and John Merritt would like to hear what you thought of their last issue...

Having set the stage, only time will tell if DH's revised policy will work, or even if it is desired. As for this issue, 23 is an auspicious number as any illuminated devotee will know and it does provide that imbalance between non-fiction and fiction that I desire!

A word or two about the contents: Alan Jones is a well-known film critic, contributor to Cinefantastique (the premier fantasy film magazine), L'Ecran Fantastique and here in this country, to Starburst. His excellent introduction to the films of Pete Walker will be of great interest to all horror movie aficionados.

You may wish to forgive an editor contributing to his own magazine... My article on Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu has had a chequered history. Originally it formed an introduction I wrote to a collection of the author's stories I put together for Corvi Books (Masters of Terror 2: Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu). The book was shelved.

(Continued on page 32).

The Terror Film Career Of Pete Walker

Alan Jones

"DIRECTORS ARE very overrated. What exactly does William Friedkin's The Wages of Fear mean to the general public - nothing at all to most people except the usual amount of film buffs."

Thus speaks Pete Walker, one of Britain's most successful independent film makers, and even though he believes he has "limited directorial ability"; he has contributed to the horror genre or as he would prefer to call it, the Terror genre a series of very powerful films. Films that were before their time in many ways. Now with titles like Zombies, Friday the Thirteenth and Maniac, making outrageous gore and inventive deaths respectable at the box office, the time has come to re-appraise Walker's films. As other British horror films of the '70's wallowed in cosy pseudo-Hammer Gothique, Walker's films resolutely dealt with contemporary storylines aimed to shock and disturb, a talent he had learned in the field he had started out in - Sexploitation.

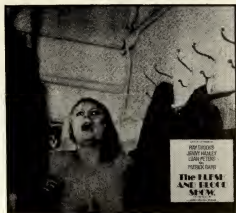
I Like Birds, Strip Poker, School For Sex and Girls for Men Only all made money, but then this lucrative field started moving towards the pornographic and hardcore areas, "and I just wasn't interested. I'm actually quite conservative really as I do believe in censorship. I think films can deprave and corrupt. It is all a question of taste. I have stretched censorship to its limits and although a lot of critics won't agree with this, I think I have always been on the side of good taste."

Die Screaming Marianne, starring Susan George and made mainly on location in the Algarve in 1971, is the starting point for Walker's Horror career. A borderline suspense thriller written by Murray Smith concerning the efforts of Marianne's father, "The Judge", to extract from her the number of his late wife's Swiss bank account as it not only contains £700,000 but damning evidence of his cor-



rupt practices while in office. Practically everyone dies either by method or accident but what one can see through the virtually incomprehensible plot is the recurring themes that will crop up in later Walker films: the death of the personable hero, the predatory half-sister or, more obviously the weakness of the male sex and the female as dominatrix. Die Screaming Marianne has a tense and ominous beginning but the scene that really works is Barry Evans trapped in a seedy Soho apartment with two villains masquerading as policemen. This scene is very Hitchcockian in execution, but as Walker says, who is a great Hitchcock fan, "we are all doing what Hitchcock did fifteen, twenty years ago. It isn't just Brian De Palma who is guilty, we all are."

In 1972 came The Flesh and Blood Show written by Alfred Shaughnessy which utilised the 3-D concept used earlier in the year for Walker's The Four Dimensions of Greta. Walker had found a camera mouldering away in an old studio and discovered it was one that could be used in the anaglyph process of 3-D filming in which the audience wore cardboard glasses with red and green plastic lenses. The excuse for this was the flashback sequence at the



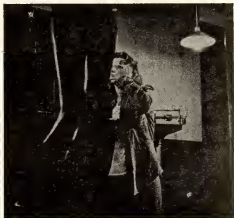
climax that explained who or what was killing off the out-of-work actors assembled together in a seaside pier theatre. What horror there is in the film is dissipated by the obligatory sexual content and the appalling continuity, but as unfulfilled as the film is one can see The Flesh and Blood Show as the logical step toward the Grand Guignol of two years later.

In 1974 Walker made House of Whipcord for the modest amount of £60,000. "I have good ideas for the concept of films and Whipcord was my best. Modern Gothique stories are what I prefer as there is more horror to be had out of people's minds. Normal people who behave abnormally, that's the common denominator in all my films." House of Whipcord written by David MacGillivray, is a minor masterpiece of suspense that utilises Hitchcock's Psycho device of killing the heroine when the audience least expects it. It also achieves an edge-of-the-seat nail biting atmosphere as it tells the story of how model Anne-Marie (Penny Irving) becomes imprisoned in an unofficial correction centre run by the manic Mrs. Wokehurst, using her blind husband, a retired Justice of the Peace, as a pawn to make sure that all the inmates eventually die. Solitary confinement follows flogging culminating in death by hanging and nobody escapes. The tension mounts due to Walker's superb use of a trick beginning and the horror comes not from the more explicit corrective sequences but from our sympathies with Anne-Marie, the fact that anybody could get caught up in such a tangibly real situation beyond their control. This was also the first film in which Walker's discovery, actress Sheila Keith, made her debut, and she was a revelation. Here, as a warden

she is the epitome of perverted evil. "Sheila is an actress who never needs direction. Anyone who knows my films will realise by now that she always has something to do with the explanation. I thought she was going a bit over the top in The Comeback but she was injecting a certain amount of humour that actually made the part work better."

David MacGillivray: "House of Whipcord was my big break and my best film. I wrote it in two weeks for £200. There were no re-writes and by sheer accident it turned out superbly. I say sheer accident because there was no reason why it should have worked as well as it did. It was the first horror film I'd ever written and it was Pete Walker's first pure horror film and he used all mainly untried actors. I never tire of watching it and in my opinion it deserves to become a horror classic due to its claustrophobic and unnerving atmosphere.

MacGillivray subsequently wrote Walker's next three films.



HOUSE OF WHIPCORD

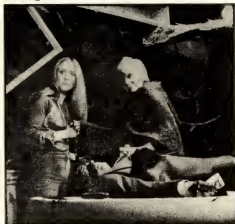
Frightmare followed hot on the heels of House of Whipcord and starred Sheila Keith as Dorothy Yates, committed to an asylum in 1957 for cannibalism. She is eventually acquitted and certified sane but her craving still persists despite her daughter supplying her with animal brains and pretending they're human. Edmund Yates, effectively played by Rupert Davies impotently watches as Dorothy resumes her practice of advertising Tarot card readings and despatching the callers with blood-crazed relish via red hot pokers

and pitchforks. Walker believes this to be his best film and he's right. Compelling and intense, it is Britain's answer to The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Walker's bleak and chilling vision of the triumph of evil over good is contained in the shattering climax where Jackie, (Deborah Fairfax - Walker's best heroine to date) sees her boyfriend's brains drilled out with a Black and Decker and watches while her mother and sister close in on her with a meat cleaver. "Evil triumphing over good is probably my comment on life today. People get away with everything. I think in some ways I pioneered this downbeat ending trend. I want an audience to come out of the theatre thinking and feeling frustrated." The horror contained in Frightmare had the mainstream critics apoplectic and they launched on the film with such vehemence that Walker decided to use the quotes on posters advertising the film both here and in America. "The critics write for their readers, little realising that most audiences love horror



HOUSE OF MORTAL SIN

failing to add that in fact a lot of movies used real blood for special effects. The film was House of Mortal Sin, (The Confessional in the U.S.) and it was released in 1976 by Columbia-Warner. Peter Cushing was first offered the part of Xavier Meldrum who, as a priest with 30 years of celibacy behind him, sublimates his desires by breaking the ethic of the confessional and morally torturing his distressed victims with guilt. Anybody trying to stop this course of "divine justice" is murdered by such diverse means as incense burners, suffocation, scalding and poisoned holy wafers. "Cushing wanted to play the part but at the time made it a policy not to play villains. Now after Star Wars of course that is no longer true. Also any picture he appeared in seemed to involve the Hammer name and I never wanted a picture of mine to have that sort of sell." Anthony Sharp eventually played the role and gave a tremendous performance equally matched by Sheila Keith's housekeeper, sporting a black eye-patch and secretly harbouring her jilted love for Meldrum from 30 years before. It is this character who decides on the double suicide pact that gives the film its clever twist. "I don't think House of Mortal Sin achieved what I wanted it to. Somewhere there is a very serious film to make about the subject. I mean, what do these priests do? I grew up with this Roman Catholic background and it is a lot of rubbish. Anthony Sharp came from this background too and he found the scene where he kills his bedridden mother with the holy sacrament very distasteful indeed." Despite some plot contrivances



FRIGHTMARE

films whether on the level of high camp or just as a frightening release. As the critics see more of my films and as I meet them at press shows, I think they appreciate more what I am trying to achieve." Frightmare crystallised Walker's directorial style and put him ahead as a major force working in the horror field.

If the critics hated Frightmare then they were certainly more shocked by the central theme of Walker's next film. Added to this was the Sunday People's "shocking" front page expose that actual human blood was used for the murder sequences,

that don't logically follow through, House of Mortal Sin is Walker's best use of the theme of a respected public person using his position to pass moral judgement on those he sees as corrupt. More recently Anthony Shaffer's Absolution has taken the same idea of the ethic of the confessional and has woven a brilliant horror tease around the premise, but a more serious film has yet to be attempted.

Schizo saw a departure from the usual Walker storyline, "it was less Gothique. I wanted less incident and outrage. Schizo was an attempt to level off the Gothique and make things a little more threatening than over the top. It was purposely under-written and I see it as an improvement in an area I wanted to move into." Walker at the time of the film's release stated that no one would guess the killer's identity. Set in this straight thriller format, he was wrong, it was obvious right from the start who the schizophrenic is. The basic fault with Schizo is that Walker was more concerned with hiding this identity that he fills the screen with elaborately set up red herrings and literally bends the plotline to fit his needs. Flashbacks that lie are a staple Hitchcockian device that unfortunately didn't work in this context. The only moment of real horror is when Queenie Watts receives a knitting needle through her head. Schizo marked the parting of the ways between Walker and writer Mac-Gillivray. It also significantly did not feature Sheila Keith even though Lynne Frederick was excellent as the seemingly persecuted Samantha Gray. Former pop star John Leyton as Samantha's newly wed husband was atrocious and Walker has this to



THE COMEBACK

say about his juvenile male leads: "What you have to remember is that the parts aren't particularly good for men. They have to pretend to be slightly inept, like Paul Greenwood in Frightmare, otherwise they'd be rushing to the rescue far too early. John Leyton isn't a great actor and it wasn't much of a part for him. Women do dominate in my films also, another comment of mine on the times, and I've always had most difficulty directing them. Perhaps it is my fault that I haven't got strong performances from my male leads but I need to play them down from the point of view of the plot." Schizo was released by Columbia-Warner in 1976 and the artwork they used for the poster was not what Walker had in mind. "I wasn't happy with the soft sell they gave it. The major releasing companies have no idea how to sell an exploitation film at all. In America we opted for a new company to release the film and their campaign was worse." In Britain a lot of people objected to the poster and its glib definition of Schizophrenia, "when the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing," so much so that this was eventually removed from the artwork.



SCHIZO

1975's The Comeback started life as I wake up Screaming, became The Sixth Gate of Hell, while it was being shot sported The Day the Screaming Stopped until The Comeback was eventually chosen. "I thought all the other titles were too down market and catchpenny, I wanted something classier." Ringo Starr was the first consideration for the role of Nick Cooper who stages a comeback in the recording industry under the auspices of David Doyle as Webster Jones. Then Cat Stevens was suggested until - "I saw

Jack Jones on T.V. in a 'Macmillan and Wife' episode and I thought he was terrific. I also needed a name Americans would know and as soon as he read the script he became very keen to do it." Walker believes The Comeback to be his most technically adept film to date. The film is also a fusion of the Gothique elements found in his earlier films within the thriller/whodunnit formula he has recently favoured. Add to this Jack Jones' winning performance, a script by Murray Smith with nods to David Macgillivray's excellent style and another finely etched performance from Sheila Keith, who, nobody will be surprised to find out is trying to drive Jones mad, due to her daughter's suicide when he retired the first time and whose body she keeps mummified in the attic surrounded by posters and trinkets of her former idol.

Since The Comeback Pete Walker has been involved in a number of projects. He was at one stage going to direct the Sex Pistols' film The Great Rock and Roll Swindle and previous to this had the idea to do a rock version of the classic story Svengali. "It was a script that was a good idea. Columbia asked me about it recently

but I didn't see it as a Terror story although it did involve cellars and sleaze. We wanted name songwriters to do the score but the whole project seems unlikely even though the concept is just as relevant now as it was in Victorian Paris." More recently Allan F. Bodoh of Mar Vista pictures in America wanted him to direct the sequel to Dogs called Cats but his most recent film Home Before Midnight was a return to softcore sexploitation with its rivetingly sensational story of underage schoolgirl sex. As of writing he has a project nearly ready for shooting. Deliver Us From Evil will hopefully star Rock Hudson and be shot on location in Mexico. Purportedly a similar story to that of Schizo, Walker has co-written it with Michael Armstrong, the director of The Haunted House of Horror and the still banned Mark of the Devil. As with all his films he will fund it independently.

"I've always financed my films themselves as I want to do what I want to do. Perhaps I haven't done it as well as I've liked, I don't have unlimited funds, but I'm always striving for standards. There are always compromises, the skill, if I have any skills at all is not to let them show."

THE CHENNAUT

Richard Smith

Beyond the misty mountains
Beyond the dark valleys
On the shores of an older sea
Lie the eternal cities of the Chennaut.

Where stars gleam in the afternoon
And far across the shallow ocean
The wind lingers in bare trees
In the dark autumn of the world.

Through vast dim halls and lonely towers
On moss-meadows by the sad water
They glide like ghosts, in seasons and long years
Stalking shadows in the day's red ebb.

The Invisible Prince

David Sutton

AS RED-TINTED highlights of the setting sun caught the myriad windows of the city and the tumult of everyday life gradually became more ordered and quiet, so a certain man put on his overcoat as he stood in his house in that fashionable part of the town. The fiery glory of the sunset gave way to grey dusk and the man, a recluse and haunter of the twilight, issued forth from his home and, hidden by night's early shadows, walked out into the street. In the less frequented parts of the city, over cobbled alleyways, the buildings absorbing the sombre tones of the encroaching night, the tall, handsome figure walked, himself casting balefully thin shadows. Finally he came upon one of his favorite haunts: a small, crumbling bookshop. The gentleman entered into the gloomy, musty-smelling interior of the establishment and asked the proprietor with a smile, "Any more ghost stories for me?" The bookseller immediately slipped back into the darkness created by the stacks of leather-bound volumes surrounding him and after a few minutes emerged into the diffused light once more and gave the waiting visitor several old books. The tall customer would then linger awhile, eagerly devouring the tales of supernatural terror and occult knowledge that the bookseller had handed him...

The paragraph above could describe a town in New England - Providence - during the early 1930's and it could be a portrayal of the 'strange' habits of H. P. Lovecraft, that contemporary giant of the horror story. But in fact, the city is Dublin in the 1870's and the character is, of course, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu. The point being that Le Fanu was in fact more like the romanticised Lovecraft than Lovecraft was in real life. As we now know, the Providence writer of cosmic horror was not a recluse at all, as his more recent biographers demonstrate. However, Le Fanu, in his later years, definitely withdrew from society, saw very few people was haunted by dreams and nightmares and evoked many of his ghostly tales as the result of these things. This reclusiveness earned Le Fanu the romantic nickname of "The Invisible Prince".

Sheridan LeFanu came into this world on August 28th, 1814, the son of Philip Le Fanu, then chaplain of the Royal Hibernian Military School in the Phoenix Park, Dublin. His ancestry could be traced to Caen in Normandy, as far back as the 15th century, the family being of Huguenot descent. In the 17th century, Charles Le Fanu de Cresserons, a Huguenot refugee, settled in Ireland and his grandson finally left a large amount of property to the family in Dublin its environs.

Even in his early years, Le Fanu had a liking for solitude - although he had an elder sister and a younger brother - and when unwilling to see visitors, he would retreat to a room at the top of the house, which could only be reached by a retractable ladder. When Le Fanu was twelve years old the family moved to Abington, six miles from Dublin and it was there his tutor idled his time, leaving the young gentlemen to their own devices. However, this lack of schooling did nothing to affect the young Le Fanu's absorption of knowledge, for he would read without restriction in his father's large and well-stocked library, where he found books on demonology, the occult and folklore, which subjects would later provide the foundation for his inclination to write macabre stories and novels.

During his boyhood, Le Fanu was also to hear the mysterious oral tales and superstitions of the people, the folklore that was his country's rich heritage, with stories of ghosts and banshees and the ghostly riders, or 'phookas'. One of Le Fanu's biographers, S. M. Ellis, wrote on this point: "Only a few years were to elapse after his boyhood passed before he wrote down and embellished with supreme artistry these aural tales he had loved in his childhood; and then, with increasing power of composition, he went on to the creation of some of the greatest stories of mystery and the supernatural ever written in any language. As in the case of the most imaginative authors, Le Fanu owed a great deal to his irregular education and escape from the hide-bound moulds and individuality slaying codes of

boarding schools." (Quoted from Wilkie Collins, Le Fanu & Others by S. M. Ellis, published by Constable & Co., 1931).

Le Fanu entered the university, Trinity College, Dublin in the 1830's and there distinguished himself with his speeches for the college historical society. Although he began writing stories soon after he graduated from Trinity College in 1837, he was at the time training to be a lawyer. He never practised law however, but instead took up journalism. He bought a number of journals published in Dublin and fused them into the Dublin Evening Mail, a paper which was still in business up to a few years ago.

In 1844 he married Susan Bennett and by her had four children, two sons and two daughters. One of his sons, George Brinsley, became a well-known artist in the black and white medium and created several illustrations for his father's stories. Le Fanu's happy marriage was obliterated when, in 1858 his wife died, and he retired to the seclusion of number eighteen Merrion Square, Dublin, where he lived for the rest of his life.

In was in 1845 that he began pub-

lishing the first of his fourteen novels, but after a second, two years later, he left novel writing severely alone for fourteen years. Of his novels, only three are considered to be his great achievement in that medium, The House by the Churchyard (1861), Uncle Silas (1864) and Wylder's Hand (1864). Le Fanu is more fondly remembered for his short stories of terror and the supernatural and most will readily attest his superb ability in the medium.

In 1861 Le Fanu became editor and proprietor of The Dublin University Magazine and it was in this auspicious publication that the bulk of his short work appeared. He owned the magazine until about 1869, when he sold it and from then onwards his tales were published in various other periodicals of his day.

During the last few years of his life Le Fanu was so preoccupied with the supernatural that all the stories he wrote then confirmed this obsession. He became strongly influenced by the doctrines of the Swedish philosopher, Emmanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg was an eighteenth century medium and clairvoyant, though by no means was he a Spiritualist Medium in the



usual sense of the term, because Spiritualism did not emerge until the mid-nineteenth century. Le Fanu's interest in this strange mystic, his seclusion from the world and his interest in the weird and the occult in general must have deeply wrought themselves on his imagination and the results are some of the best ghost stories ever written. Even his method of writing must have allowed those cold shivers of horror to impinge upon his consciousness and, referring again to his biographer, S. M. Ellis, here is a description of Le Fanu's method: "He wrote mostly in bed at night, using copy-books for his manuscript. He always had two candles by his side on a small table; one of these dimly glimmering tapers would be left burning while he took a brief sleep. Then, when he awoke about two a.m. amid the darkling shadows of the heavy furnishings and hanging of his old-fashioned room, he would brew himself some strong tea - which he drank copiously and frequently throughout the day - and write for a couple of hours in that eerie period of the night when human vitality is at its lowest ebb and the Powers of Darkness rampant and terrifying."

At the end of his life Le Fanu suffered from the plague of a recurring dream, in which he saw that a crumbling old mansion was about to fall and crush him. This horrible and portentous nightmare was communicated to his doctor, who said, when Le Fanu died on February 7th, 1873: "I feared this - that house fell at last."

The stories I have chosen to comment on represent Le Fanu at the peak of his creative skill, where his narrative flair and the ingenuity of his terrors are at their most malevolent. His best period comes within the years 1861-1872, just over a decade - the last of the author's life. These stories include hauntings, demoniacal possession, folkloristic terrors, satanic pacts and the vampire theme. The rich folklore of Ireland was envisaged in The Child That Went With The Fairies (first published in All the Year Round for February 1870), a dreamy, haunting story featuring one of the most potent myths that Le Fanu would have heard in his youth from his elders. Despite our exposure to fairies as delicate, pleasant creatures living at the bottom of the garden, this tale harks back to the real nature of the 'little folk', and the bizarre group of fairies who steal away a child in this story are far from pleasant. Like a number of Le Fanu tales, this has

a curious psychological effect on the reader, for the author sets his scenic grandeur and then sweeps in with characters like a bunch of possessed souls suddenly freed from our own subconscious.

Le Fanu found lasting fame through his shorter works, though it was not always so. Nelson Browne, in his biography, Sheridan Le Fanu (Arthur Barker 1951) had this to say about the author: "Even in his own lifetime Le Fanu was not a popular author. His skill in creating ghosts and exploiting the horrible and macabre is of such a delicate and unobtrusive kind that it has always failed to attract the notice of those whose tastes, if they tend in this direction at all, have no palate for subtle flavours." And further, Nelson Browne says: "Le Fanu, with fourteen novels and at least two-score shorter pieces, was the equal of the most prolific of the great Victorian writers in output alone, but the Victorian reading public preferred something more robust, less pessimistic, less psychologically disturbing. On the other hand we today, less psychologically stable and at the same time more worldly-wise than the Victorians when it comes to dealing with neuroses, are more attuned to Le Fanu's quiet yet restless undertones."

Schalken the Painter (May 1839 in The Dublin University Magazine), is one of the author's best early stories. It imparts all those elements which prefigure much of his later work: the grotesque perambulations of the dead and their ability to manipulate psychic forces; the evil contract entered into; and the subtle, erotic undertones which Le Fanu blends with his deftly etched horrors. Schalken, whose morbid paintings set the story in motion, is a subsidiary character until the revelation at the story's end, when his lost love, Rose Velderkaust, reveals the awful secret of her grim spouse. In Nelson Browne's biography, he has this to say about the story: "This strange tale, with its hint of demoniacal possession and its charnal-houses atmosphere, is Le Fanu's first essay in his most horrible vein, and although there is little evidence of the finesse that he achieved in later examples, the impressiveness is lasting."

It is certainly true that although written over a century ago, many of these stories hold a timeless quality whose subtle and demoniacal characters, despite the affectations of the literature of the



day, find ready entry into our contemporary and disordered cosmos. For instance, Uitor de Lacy (The Dublin University Magazine, December 1861), is the nightmarish account of an ancient and noble Irish family who, having come upon hard times, dwell in only a portion of their sequestered, ancestral home, while round about, the intrusion of a malignant and spectral figure weaves a web of doom. De Lacy is given a legacy by his dying father, which terrified him in some way when he heard of it as a boy and only later in the story do we see the result of this fearful bequest. What the former de Lacy did to bring upon his son and his two beautiful daughters is merely hinted at, but around this is the aura of the ghostly ruin of the ancient castle and the rocky glen from which it protrudes - a place of sunset shadows and unhealthy phenomena; a place which itself seems only to exist in this dimension for brief periods of time, disappearing from the sight of the mortals without.

Despite the lasting fame Le Fanu has earned in the reading public, even in 1974 it was considered that his work was undervalued by the devotees of the ghost and horror story. In *Shadow*, a fantasy literature review I published and edited from 1968-1974, the very last issue contained an appreciation of the author by one of his own countrymen, Patrick Quigley, in which he said in part: "He was a strange and eccentric man; intelligent, possessing a sense of humour and of honesty; inclined to morbidness and mildly paranoid; conservative, yet he wasn't afraid to introduce sexual elements into his writings. As with the best of horror writers he takes great care with descriptive detail, so that an amazingly clear picture of the background to the stories emerges to be absorbed by our minds, in which curiosity has been aroused. As we go through this world of the past there is not the dusty heaviness that confronts us in history books... It's surprising that he could be so neglected, even by weird-fantasy readers. There are many similarities between Le Fanu and Lovecraft - their interest in ancient architecture and antiquity, and in their habit of application to detail and portentous hints in their writings. Furthermore they both evolved a definite standpoint in regard to the supernatural that was naturally their own. While Lovecraft opted for the view of Man in a dark, chaotic universe, Le Fanu took a more ordered view of things." (From, *Le Fanu, An Appreciation*

by Patrick Quigley, Shadow No. 21 August 1974).

In Green Tea (All The Year Round, October/November 1869), the title refers to a beverage taken in excessive quantities by the unfortunate clergyman in the story, who is haunted by a particularly malevolent demon. The demon's form would be common enough were other circumstances prevailing than those of a supernatural manifestation. Le Fanu also used this theme in another of his tales, The Watcher (also published as The Familiar) and both are regarded as among his most popular stories. I have chosen Green Tea as the more intriguing, yet both stories display a prosaic approach to the supernatural compared with some of his less well remembered tales. The prologue to this story and to some others of Le Fanu's works, features a certain Dr. Hesselius, a German physician skilled in psychiatry and the occult sciences. According to Nelson Browne, this character represents the author himself, with a dash of Swedenborgian speculation thrown in for good measure.

In spite of the fact that stories such as Green Tea are regularly anthologised, it should be remembered that for some time the bulk of Le Fanu's shorter work was not known to be his, much of it being published anonymously in the journals of his day. Important and laborious work was undertaken by that great writer of ghost stories, M. R. James, who unearthed and published some notable stories in the collection, Madam Crowl's Ghost & Other Tales of Mystery (G. Bell & Sons, 1923). Le Fanu had kept accurate records of all his literary transactions, but these were somehow lost after his death. James went to work, carefully reading through the magazines in which Le Fanu was known to have been published and discovered several hitherto unknown Le Fanu stories. Having put the collection together, M. R. James stated: "He stands absolutely alone in the first rank as a writer of ghost stories... Nobody sets the scene better than he, nobody touches in the effective detail more deftly." Praise, indeed from one whose own contributions to the ghostly short story are considered to be rarely surpassed. The title story from James' collection (first published in All The Year Round, December 1870), is a fascinating one, in which is displayed a compulsion for the grotesque, couched in Le Fanu's beautifully underplayed style. The story is remarkable in that the ghost,

as it were a second-hand one, is merely the catalyst in which the author intertwines a tale of malevolence, insanity, murder and gruesome discoveries.

An intriguing anecdote will not be out of place at this point, and considering the aforementioned problems of disinterring anonymously published writings of Le Fanu's, is a possible reason for the long-standing acceptance of the following literary ruse. In July of 1947, Weird Tales published a story under the byline of Le Fanu entitled The Churchyard Yew. This tale was subsequently collected by August Derleth in his anthology, Night's Yawning Peal (1952). What we had, it appeared, was a hitherto completely unheard of Le Fanu story. However, in T. G. L. Cockcroft's index to Weird Tales, there appeared a note to the effect that the story was not Le Fanu's at all. In a subsequent publication, Cockcroft elaborated by saying that the story was in fact written by August Derleth, but neither reports were substantiated with evidence. The final revelation came in a collection of Le Fanu's lesser work, published by Arkham House (The Purcell Papers). Derleth put the collection together from several of Le Fanu's early and minor pieces and he included The Churchyard Yew amongst them. However, the book did not appear during Derleth's lifetime and when it was published, the story included a note in which a Derleth letter was quoted in part, which stated that he had hoaxed the then editor of Weird Tales (Dorothy McIlraith) with the story and it was duly published as by Sheridan Le Fanu. Derleth further stated in the letter that he hopes the story will remain undetected by literary experts. So the truth finally came out, but there is little doubt that had The Purcell Papers been published while Derleth still lived, the disclosure would not have been made, leaving the story in a limbo of uncertainty.

Le Fanu's masterwork, and a story certainly written by him this time, is Carmilla (The Dark Blue, 1871-1872). Not only his best story, but one of the most profound and important vampire stories ever written. It pre-dates Bram Stoker's long drawn-out Dracula by some twenty-six years and the author's research into vampire lore is abundantly exploited. Carmilla, by stages, by degrees exquisite in their hair-tingling excitement, reveals the illicit, shocking and lesbianistic eroticism of the beautiful vampire. Le Fanu with astonishing subtlety creates a moving,

nightmarish and sexually-charged story that invokes its hypnotic spell as easily as Carmilla herself raids the virtues of her helpless and entranced victims. At one time Le Fanu reveals his monster to be just that - disposing of her victims with tasteless brevity. Then in demoniacally capricious mood, to savour the pleasurable, sensuous delight of making her favorite victim join with her in a joyous, endless passion; wherein Carmilla's lust for blood is kept bubbling as an almost irrepressible undercurrent. Remembering that the story is some 109 years old, it is a remarkably ageless one and its subtle blend of eroticism and horror assures it a ready place in our contemporary minds. Nelson Browne says that, "Carmilla is the quintessence of vampire lore. Less prolix than the time-honoured Dracula, less extravagant than the most thoroughgoing of all shockers, Varney the Vampire, it is at once distinguished from the crude 'feast of blood' variety of vampire stories by the plausibility of the narrative and by those touches of funeste horror which Le Fanu alone can produce."

The Invisible Prince, stalking through those shrouded Dublin streets, saw strange phantasms; saw the implicit supernatural splendour of wild and lonely hills; found friendly discourse with rampant ghouls and wicked but beautiful vampires; let himself be drawn away by fairy-folk in their resplendent coaches; saw in hidden glens, castles whose walls concealed wraiths as substantial as the living occupants. His dreams, nightmares, re-written folklore and traditions, his inspiring overview of a Nature beautiful and inimicable to Man is there for everyone to read. His view is one we should be happy to resurrect, for Le Fanu's shorter works are regularly kept in print by one published or another.

Once again looking at Le Fanu's tales after a number of years I found that far from being old-fashioned, the writer seemed to be timeless - his passions and his horrors still work. I hope that readers of this article will, like me, pick up and read with delight the ghost stories of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu.

THE GREEN MAN SPEAKS

Jon Bye

Men carved me from woodland
then May collaborations -
cavorting as Jack and King -
brought disapproval; I took
to this dark fastness.

For who looks high
at the church's rigging?
So, perched on a corbel's grain
your guidebook's Foliate Head
glories in obscurity.

Gathering strength from disregard,
rarely seen, less comprehended,
I mouth the oaken wreaths
of certain victory
- one way or another.

Les Fleurs

Thomas Ligotti

APRIL 17th. Flowers sent out today in the a.m.

May 1st. Today - and I thought it would never happen again - I have met someone about whom, I think, I can be hopeful. Her name is Daisy. She works in a florist shop! The florist shop, I might add, where I quietly paid a visit to gather some sorrowful flowers for Clare, who to the rest of the world is still a missing person. At first, of course, Daisy was politely reserved when I asked about some lily blossoms for a loved one's memorial. I soon cured her, however, of this unnecessarily detached manner. In my deeply shy and friendly tone of voice I asked about some of the other flowers in the shop, ones having nothing to do with loss, if not everything to do with gain. She was quite glad to take me on a trumped up tour of hyacinths and hibiscuses. I confessed to knowing next to nothing about commercial plants and things, and remarked on her enthusiasm for the study, hoping all the while that at least part of her animation was on account of me. "Oh, I love working with flowers," she said. "I think they're real interesting." Then she asked that did I know there were plants having flowers which opened only at night, and that certain types of violets bloomed only in darkness underground. My inner flow of thoughts and sensations paused briefly. Though I had already sensed she was a girl of special imagination this, I think, was the first overt hint I received of just how special it was. I judged my efforts to know her better would not be wasted, as they have been before. "That's real interesting about those flowers," I said, smiling a hothouse warm smile. There was a pause which I filled in with my name. She then told me hers. "Now what kind of flowers would you like," she asked. I sedately requested an arrangement suitable for the grave of a long late grandmother. Before leaving the shop I told Daisy I might need to stop by again to satisfy some future floral needs. She seemed to have no objection to this. With the vegetation nestled in my arm I songfully walked out of the store. I then

proceeded directly to Chapel Gardens cemetery. For a while I sincerely made the effort to find a headstone that might by coincidence display my lost one's name. And any dates would just have to do. I thought she deserved this much at least. As things transpired however, the recipient of my floral memorial had to be someone named Clarence.

May 16th. Daisy visited my apartment for the first time and fell in love with its quaint refurbishments. "I adore well-preserved old places," she said. It seemed to me she really did. I thought she would. She remarked what decorative wonders a few plants, hanging and otherwise, would do for the ancient rooms. She was obviously sensitive to the absence of natural adornments in my bachelor quarters. "Night-blooming cereuses?" I asked, trying not to mean too much by this and give myself away. A mild grin appeared on her face, but it was not an issue I thought I could press at the time, and even now I only delicately press it within these scrapbook pages. She wandered about the apartment some more. I watched her, seeing the place with new eyes. Then suddenly I realised I had regrettably overlooked something. She looked it over. The object was positioned on a low table before a high window and between its voluminous curtains. It seemed so vulgarly prominent to me then, especially since I hadn't intended to let her see anything of that kind so early in our friendship. "What is this?" she asked, her voice expressing a kind of outraged curiosity bordering on plain outrage. "It's just a sculpture. I told you I do things like that. It's not very good. Kinda dumb." She examined the piece more closely. "Watch that," I warned. She let out a tiny, unserious "Ow." "Is it supposed to be some kind of cactus or something?" she inquired. For a moment, a hopeful one on my part, she seemed to express a genuine interest. "It has little teeth," she observed, "on these big tongue things." They do look like tongues; I'd never thought of that. Rather ingenious comparison, considering. I hoped her imagination had found fertile earth and would grow, but instead she next revealed

a moribund disgust. "It looks more like some kind of animal than a sculpture of a plant. It's got a velvety kind of fur and looks like it might crawl away." I felt like crawling away myself at that point. I asked her, as a quasi-botanist, if there were not plants resembling birds and other animal life. This was my feeble attempt to exculpate my creation from any charges of unnaturalness. It's strange how you're sometimes forced to take a different point of view through borrowed eyes. Finally I mixed some drinks and we went on to the other things. I put on some music.

Soon afterward, however, the bland harmony of the music was undermined by another unfortunate dissonance. The detective (Briceberg, I think) arrived for an unexpected second interview with me. Fortunately I was able to keep him and his questions out in the hallway the entire time. We reviewed the previous dialogue we'd had. I reiterated to him that Clare was just someone I worked with and with whom I was professionally friendly. It appeared that some of my co-workers, unidentified, suspected that Clare and I were romantically involved. "Office gossip," I countered, knowing she was one girl who knew how to keep certain secrets, even if she could not be trusted with others. She was not much else, though. No, I said, I definitely had no idea where she could have disappeared to. I did manage to subversively hint, however, that I would not be overly surprised if in a sudden flight of neurotic despair she had finally set out for her secret dreamland. I myself had despaired to find within Clare's dark and promisingly moody borders lay a disappointing dreamland of white picket fences and flower-printed curtains. No, I didn't tell that to the detective. Besides, I further argued, it was well known in the office that Clare had begun dating someone approximately seven to ten days (my personal estimation of the span of her disloyalty) before her disappearance. So why bother me? This, I found out, was the reason: he had also been informed, he informed me, of my belonging to a certain offbeat organization. I replied there was nothing offbeat in serious philosophical study; furthermore, I was an artist, as he well knew, and as anybody knows, artistic personalities have a perfectly natural tendency toward such things. I thought he would understand if I put it that way. He did. The man appeared satisfied with my every statement. Indeed, I suspect he was predisposed to be satisfied with almost anything I might have said, short of outright

confession of the foulest kind of play. "Was that about the girl in your office?" Daisy asked me afterward. "M-hm," I noised. I was brooding and silent for a while, hoping she would attribute this to my inward lament for that strange girl at the office and not to the lamentably imperfect evening we'd had. "Maybe I'd better go," she said, and very soon did. There was not much to salvage of the evening anyway. After that I got very drunk on a liquer tasking of flowers from open fields, or so it seemed. I also took this opportunity to reread a story about some men who visit the white waste wonderlands of the polar regions. I don't expect to dream tonight, having had all I need in my frigidly dreaming wakefulness. Brotherhood of Paradise offbeat indeed!

May 21st. Day came up to the office of Glacy Regan Advertising Agency to meet me for lunch. I introduced her around the department to the few people I get along with, and definitely not to those who spread rumors about me. I showed her my little corner of commercial artistry and what I was working on. "Oh, that's lovely," she said when she spied a picture of a nymph with flowers in her freshly-shampooed hair. "That's really nice." That "nice" remark almost spoiled my day. I asked her to look closely at the flowers mingling freshly in the fresh locks of the nymph. It was barely noticeable that one of the flower stems was growing out of, or perhaps into, the creature's head. Day didn't seem to appreciate the craftiness of my craft very much. And I thought we were making such progress along "offbeat" paths. (Damn that Briceberg!) Perhaps I should wait until we return from our trip before showing her any of my paintings. I want her to be prepared. Everything is all prepared for our vacation, at least; Day finally found someone to take care of the cat living at her flat.

June 10th. Good-bye diary. See you when I get back.

September 1st. I remember, with pleasure and anxiety, a particular episode from Day's and my tropical sojourn. Before too many more estranging weeks have passed, I would like to take the opportunity to record this adventure. I'm not sure whether the circumstances here represent an impasse or a turning point. Perhaps there is some point that I have still to entirely get. As yet I am, not surprisingly, in the dark. Here, nevertheless, is a fragment from our vacation interlude.



A Hawaiian paradise; at night. Actually we were just gazing upon the beachside luxuriance from our hotel veranda. Day was benighted by several exotic drinks that wore flowers on their foamy heads. I was in a similar condition to hers. A few moments of heady silence passed, punctuated by an occasional sigh from Day. We heard the flapping of invisible wings whipping the warm air in darkness. We listened closely to the sounds of black orchids growing, even if there were none. "Mmmm," hummed Day. We were ripe for a whim. I had one, not knowing yet if I could pull it thoroughly off. "Can you smell the mysterious cereus?" I asked, placing one hand on her far shoulder and dramatically passing the other in a horizontal arc before the jungle beyond. "Can you?" I hypnotically repeated. "I can," said a game Day. "But can we find them, Day, and watch them open in the moonlight?" "We can, we can," she chanted giddily. We could. Suddenly the smooth-skinned leaves of the night garden were brushing against our smooth-skinned selves. Day paused to touch a flower that was orange or red but smelled of a deep violet. I encouraged us to press on across the flower-bedded earth. We plunged deeper into the dream garden. Faster, faster, faster the sounds and smells rushed by us. It was easier than I thought. At some point, with almost no effort at all, I successfully managed our full departure from known geography, and our transition from a sub- to a superlunary realm. "Day, Day," I shouted in the initial confusion and excitement. "We're here. I've never shown this to anyone. It's been such a hard secret, Day. I've wanted to tell you for so long, and show you, show you. No, don't speak. Look, look." The thrill, the thrill of seeing this dark paradise with new eyes. With doubled intensity would I now see my world. My world. She was somewhere near me in the darkness. I waited, seeing her a thousand ways in my mind before actually gazing at the real Day. I looked. "What's wrong with the stars, the sky?" was all she said. She was trembling.

At breakfast the next morning I subtly probed her thoughts for impressions and judgements of the night before. She was badly hung over and had only a chaotic recall of this wacky expedition we made the previous night through somebody's backyard. Oh, well.

Since our return I have been working on a painting entitled "Sanctum Obscurum". Though I have done this kind of work many times before I am including in this one elements that I hope will stir Day's mem-

ory and precipitate a conscious recollection of not only a very particular night in the islands but of all the subtle and not so subtle hints and suggestions I have put to her in various ways throughout our friendship. I only pray she will understand.

September 14th. Stars of disaster! Earthly, and not unearthly asters are all that fill Day's heart with gladness. She is too much a lover of natural flora to be anything else. I know this now. I showed her the painting, and even imagined she anticipated seeing it with some excitement. But I think she was just restless over what kind of fool I would make of myself next. She sat on the sofa, scraping her lower lip with a nervous forefinger. Opposite her I let a little cloth drop. She looked up as if there had been a startling noise. I was not wholly satisfied with the painting myself, but this exhibition was designed to serve an extra-aesthetic purpose. I searched her eyes for a reflection of understanding, a ripple of empathetic insight. "Well?" I asked, the necessity of the word tolling doom. Her gaze told me all I needed to know, and the clarity of the message was reminiscent of another girl I knew once. She gave me a second chance, looking at the picture with a heavily theatrical scrutiny. The picture itself? An inner refuge, cozily crowding about the periphery of a central window of leaded glass. The interior beams with a honeyed haze, as of light glowing evenly through a patterned tapestry. Beyond the window too is a sanctuary of sorts, but not of man or terrestrial nature. Outside is an over-opulent kingdom of glittering, velvety jungle-shapes. Their hyper-radiant colours are calmed by the glass, so that this strange radiance contrasts with but does not threaten the chromatic integrity of the orderly world inside. Some stars, coloured from an even more spectral edge of the spectrum, blossom in the high darkness. The outer world glistens in stellar light and also gleams from within. And there is the back view of a lone figure more distinctly reflected than anything else upon the window's surface.

"Of course, it's very good. Very realistic."

Not at all, Daisy Day. Not realistic in the least. Some uncomfortable moments after that I found out she had to be leaving. It seemed she had made girl plans with a girlfriend of hers to do some things girls do when they get together with others of their kind. I said I understood,

and I did. There was no doubt in my mind of the gender of Day's companion tonight. But it was for a different reason that I was distressed to see Day go off this evening. This is the first time, and this I could read in her every move and expression, that she has truly possessed an idea of my secrets. Of course, she always knew about the meetings I go to and all such things. I've even paraphrased and abridged for her the discussion which goes on at these gatherings, always disguising their real nature in progressively thinner guises, hoping one day to show her the naked truth. Well, tonight I think, the secret was stripped bare. Whether she believes them or not, which doesn't make any difference, she has as clear a notion as Clare ever did of all the secrets about me and the others. She has thoroughly gotten the picture now.

September 16th. Tonight was our meeting, though it was not of the regularly scheduled sort. The others feel there's a problem, and of course I know they're right. Ever since I met her I could sense a growing uneasiness, which was their prerogative. Now, however, all has changed; my stupid, romantic misjudgement has seen to that. They expressed absolute horror that an outsider should know so much. I feel it myself. Day is a stranger now, and I wonder what her loquacious self has to say about her former friend, not to mention his present ones. Many others could find out. Eventually we would have no peace. The secretness we need for our lives would be lost, and with it would go the possible keys to a poignantly hard sought kingdom. We can all feel the horror of that estrangement. We've been through this before, and I'm glad to say not only with me (Harley and his "lads", for instance). We, of course, have no secrets from each other. The others know everything about me, and I about them. They knew every step of the way my relationship with Daisy. Some of them even predicted the outcome. And though I thought I was right in taking the extravagant chance that they were wrong, I must now defer to their prophecy. Those lonely names, mes freres. "Do you want us to see it through," they said in so many words. I nodded, finally, in a score of ambiguous, half-hesitant ways. Then they sent me home. I'll never do this again, I thought, even though I've thought this before. At home I stared at the razory dentes of my furry sculpture for a perilously long while. What she saw as tongue-like floral appendages were, of course, silent: the preservation of that silence is their whole

and soulless purpose. I remember that she jokingly asked me once on what I modelled my art...

September 17th.

To Eden with me you will not leave
To live in a cottage of crazy crooked eaves.

In your own happy home you take care
these nights,
When you let your little cat in, turn
on the lights!
Something scurries behind and finds
a cozy place to stare,
Something sent to you from paradise,
paradisically so rare:
Tongues flowering; they leap out
laughing, lapping. Disappear!

I do this to pass the hours. Only to
pass the hours.

September 17th. 12.00 a.m. Flowers.



If It's Wednesday This Must Be Narnia

Andrew J. Wilson

EXPLORING THE LINKS BETWEEN PHANTASY AND REALITY

HOW WOULD YOU like to get to the phantasy land of your desire? You pay your money and you take your choice. Walking through a wardrobe, for instance, has much to recommend it (free of mess and economical of space) or you could pass through a mirror if you prefer. All sorts of doors and gateways may be found, often in the most improbable locations, but if it is more to your taste you can be simply whisked there, at no additional expense. Divers kinds of interplanetary travel are always available (write now for free brochure to Hackneyed Devices Ltd). Consider, too, our range of personalised magic rings (no, they're only eternity rings if you don't follow the instructions) and the opportunities for those of an adventurous turn of mind - how about a mysterious phenomenon in Alaska that looks like a lake but isn't? Perhaps the world of your choice is all around you, invisible but nonetheless there. Alternatively it might seem to you that the world in which you live is already phantastic beyond any acceptable norm at the best of times (God is alive and well and working on something more practical).

Flippant though this may appear to be, it does point towards what seems at first sight to be a significant differentiation between two kinds of phantasy world. On the one hand we have the invented world that exists without reference to any other world and whose conditions are entirely determined by the whim of its creator; on the other we have the invented world that at some point meets the world of what I may be allowed for the sake of argument to call reality. Where they meet in this tangential manner there is a gateway, though a gateway of a bizarre and unexpected kind. The connexion is emphasised by the fact that somebody is thrust into that world out of this.

Inasmuch as this reflects a decision made by the author it is valid as a basic classification. The creator of an independent world has only the limitations that he elects to set himself: he can fill in the background in as much or as little detail as he wishes, he can let his tale wander wherever he pleases, he can paint his world in whatever colours he likes. The potential is, in theory, limitless: as long as the author ensures that his world is consistent within itself and that he does not step too far outside the bounds of his own competence then even scientific probability can be sacrificed.

The author of a tangential world, however, has always to remember this one condition of its existence. In his own mind he must be reasonably clear as to how this world relates to ours, and his great difficulty lies in dealing with the way his characters are to get from one world to the other, and perhaps back again. It is important because, paradoxically, it is unimportant. If there is to be a fundamental theme in a story of this kind it must be that of the man from our space and time reacting to an alien environment. How he gets there is ultimately of little significance, but a story is still a story and so an explanation of some kind is expected.

In spite of the existence of tales like the legend of the Irish saint Brendan, recounting a voyage during which he encounters a series of enigmatic marvels, this concept is unknown as such in the field of traditional literature. It is only in the context of fiction as we know it that it can exist; in earlier situations it takes the form of an otherworld or a faerie land, and its origins are therefore mythical. Subsequently Swift was to put this idea to good use in *Gulliver's Travels* with a different end in view, that of satire.



One of its classic manifestations, of course, is Mark Tavin's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, but in the modern literature of phantasy one of the most familiar instances undoubtedly is Narnia, the world created by C. S. Lewis in his books for children. In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe the children climb through the back of the wardrobe to find themselves in the snow-covered wilderness of Narnia under the spell of the White Witch; in other books he makes use of alternative methods. Magic rings are necessary in The Magician's Nephew, a somewhat involved piece of business, and in The Silver Chair the gateway is simply a door in a garden wall that opens onto a quite unexpected landscape. At the beginning of Prince Caspian the children are waiting on a station platform when all of a sudden they find themselves being drawn inexorably into another world. In The Voyage of the Dawn Treader a picture on the wall is transformed before the children's eyes from a painting into the real (and very tangible) thing and they are irresistibly swept up into it. All of these are, indeed, effective transitions but it has to be admitted that they have to be: Lewis is writing for children (or in one case, according to the publisher's blurb, "for boys and girls of every age over nine", which seems reasonably comprehensive) and is obliged not to leave his audience too much in the dark. It should be noted, however, that even in his science fiction story Out of the Silent Planet Lewis feels the need to spell out precisely how Ransom reaches Venus, only to reveal that his grasp of the technology is naive and sketchy.

Lewis, of course, was influenced by

George MacDonald and it is particularly in the "rites of passage" from one world to the other that we can see this, for in Lilith he evokes a world that overlaps into the dimension of reality in such a way that the narrator can reach it by passing through a mirror. He then finds himself in a mysterious landscape that he is informed cryptically is "the region of the seven dimensions", where a large tree may at the same time be growing up the kitchen chimney; it is a world that springs above all from the symbolism of dreams.

Other worlds are located on assorted planets of varying degrees of scientific improbability. In The Worm Ouroboros E. R. Eddison transports Lessingham to the planet Mercury by elementary spacecraft, while David Lindsay's A Voyage to Arcturus involves a lengthy device for getting his travellers by means of a "torpedo of crystal" to Tormance, a planet of the star Arcturus. John Norman, on the other hand, has invented Gor, or Counter-Earth, a planet the concept of which apparently has its origin in Pythagorean speculation. Gor, too, is reached by conventional spaceship.



The alternative or parallel world is the theme on which some lands of phantasy play. Simon Tregarth in Andre Norton's Witch World, being in a somewhat desperate plight in this world, is transferred to another where he finds a part written for him. A similar situation faces Thomas Covenant in Stephen Donaldson's Lord Foul's Bane for in this world he is a man stricken with leprosy and yet, in his unconsciousness when he is in an accident with a car, he is transported to the Land where he has a place as the leader whose

return was prophesied and whose description he fits. Two of the novels of Hannes Bok use this idea: in *The Sorcerer's Ship* the hero comes round after some unidentifiable disaster to find himself at sea, lying injured on a raft of wreckage, and the sea belongs to a world that exists in some dimension other than ours. In *Beyond the Golden Stair* the transition is by means of a stairway, leading into the mysterious realm of Khoire - a stairway that seems to be of golden light.



Another variation is that of A. Merritt. In *Dwellers in the Mirage* Merritt has his characters discover another world while prospecting in Alaska. Making use of a mirage effect and playing on the idea of a sense of heightened awareness he has them break into another world by climbing down through what appears at first to be water but is in fact a layer of translucent air. It is, all in all, a very skillfully handled transition, as evocative as Merritt can be at his best.



In view of this variety of ways and means can we really see in these tangential worlds a significant category of phantasy? Or, to see it from another angle, do those worlds that are meant to be independent of ours really have anything in common?

Many writers have, indeed, created worlds linked by one devious means or another to reality but it is a point they have reached from different directions. MacDonald, as we have seen, speaks in the language of dreams - his first novel, *Phantastes*, takes place entirely in dreams - and the *Tormance* of David Lindsay is likewise a visionary world, filled with impenetrable symbols. If we consider Merritt's approach to the land of phantasy we find that his roots lie in quite a distinct kind of story, the "lost race" tale. This, exemplified by Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* and the works of Rider Haggard and Edgar Rice Burroughs, is based on the idea of a living legacy of the past, a hangover from a distant era that does have a geographical location and has merely been discovered.

There are, moreover, writers who seem to have little confidence in such connexions between their worlds and ours. Simon Tregarth, for example, soon appears to become a fully paid-up member of With World; how he got there no longer concerns him. Eddison too, begins to feel that Les-singham's trip to Mercury was not such a good idea after all and tacitly forgets about it. Originally he must have felt that the reader needed to be able to locate his imaginary world; by the time he had started on the Zimiamvian trilogy (nine years later, in 1935) he was thinking along more sophisticated lines and using the concept of parallel worlds, the transference between which he effects with devastating simplicity.

Seldom is the essence of the connexion that the hero is needed by the phantasy world as the Land of Covenant's other life needs him. His role therein is dependent on what he is in this world, and this moral infusion applies to Narnia too inasmuch as each of the children receives his due and is able to act according to his merit.

Perhaps, in the last analysis, the significance of the tangential world lies in the fact that there can be somebody with whom the reader can feel some identity; in the midst of all the strangeness he can recognise himself. At its simplest

there is someone to whom things happen: the hero is the vehicle for the experience. This is, furthermore, an easier approach as far as imagination is concerned, because the writer does not have to invent a world that is complete and consistent within itself but can use this world of ours as a reference point against which to measure the phantasy. The world need only be imagined insofar as it is perceived by the hero, whose background is ultimately that of his readers.



It is not the only way. Tolkien borrows nobody from this world but nonetheless creates the hobbits, a people with whom readers have not found it difficult to identify. Similarly Fletcher Pratt builds The Well of the Unicorn around an inexperienced and decent character who realises that he just has to buckle to and get on with it, however incomprehensible and threatening the world about him.

Nevertheless the literature of phantasy, as opposed to science fiction, is often more cautious than one might suppose. How independent, for example, is Tolkien's Middle-Earth? It is a truism now that his world is an interpretation of Europe as it was in the Middle Ages, history and language and geography all re-created in the crucible of the artist's imagination. In this Tolkien is not alone. A great deal of the literature of phantasy reflects in diverse ways the mediaeval ethos, largely because we are inclined to see in the Middle Ages an unspoilt world - a world that had not yet started to disintegrate beneath the effects of industrialisation, population increase and the potential for inconceivable destruction. The world of Pratt's The Well of the Unicorn is similarly mediaeval in tone and borrowings,

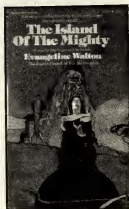
and William Morris goes to extravagant lengths to create a mediaeval landscape that depends more heavily on atmosphere and effect than on the reality of the 14th century. In addition there is James Branch Cabell's Pointesmes, which is as directly related to mediaeval France as Dunsany's Don Rodriguez is to the Golden Age of Spain.

In contrast there is a body of work set on the Earth of the distant future, which holds on to a link with this world of ours. Hodgson's The Night Land stands out amongst these, but in company with it are Jack Vance's Dying Earth, Moorcock's world in the Runestaff and Castle Brass books and Lin Carter's World's End. Here we begin to trespass on the realms of science fiction; with a book like Sterling Lanier's Hiero's Journey we are crossing the boundary on the other side of which are genuine attempts to determine what the world will be like after the holocaust. At the other extreme are the worlds of Howard's Conan and Gardner F. Fox's Kyrrik, and the Zothique of Clark Ashton Smith. All are set in the remote past of the Earth, drawing on geological and palaeontological history to a degree, and in Fox's case on the kind of pseudo-history so popular these days among those who do not know when phantasy should give way to the process of reasoning from evidence.

Another theme is the interpretation of a historical culture or situation. Eden Philpotts and Thomas Burnett Swann both wrote stories grounded in the world of Greek mythology; Ernest Bramah translated the China of reality into the phantasy China of Kai Lung. It is Tolkien's approach, too, in Farmer Giles of Ham. Again,



Evangeline Walton meted out this treatment to the Mabinogion, re-telling the tales and lending them a historical context, and from this it is but a short step to the Prydain cycle of Lloyd Alexander, children's stories set in Celtic Britain, and thence to Talbot Mundy's books about Tros of Samothrace, historical novels in all but name.



Few of the worlds stand out as genuinely independent, free of the conditions that circumscribe and define our existence. Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast, however, is certainly one of them, a truly unique and imaginative world with but the barest hints of a context in time and space. Dunsany, too, in his short stories achieves a similar effect, magical in what he creates out of the raw materials of myth and language, but for one of the most atmospheric and solidly convincing of worlds we need look no further than Ursula Le Guin's Earthsea. Seen as a whole the work of James Branch Cabell is as intriguing as his style is ironic and polished, but one suspects that the subject ultimately is the nature of authorial creation; his scope, at least, is immense, and this is his strength as much as the completeness of his conception is Tolkien's.

Even among these, however, there may be areas of weakness. Nomenclature is one, for care is necessary with names otherwise there is the risk of merely alienating the reader. Just one slipshod name may drive a nail into the phantasy as surely as do Morris' references to Plynlimon, Babylon, Rome and Alexander the Great, or for that matter, Fletcher Pratt's invocation of God, the Church, cathedrals and even Bishops. Phantasy is in effect delimited by what is not phantasy.

Delimited, but not defined. So vague

and arbitrary a statement makes no attempt to define phantasy: there are more things in phantasy than are dreamt of in this philosophy. It ignores the world of faerie existing, accessible at times, all around us and depicted in Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Kingdoms of Elfin* and neither does it take account of the uniquely surrealist vision of Eric Thacker and Anthony Earnshaw (in *Murum* and *Winterool*). It ignores, too, the mythopoetic phantasy of Richard Adams' *Shardik* and the metaphysical phantasy of Jorge Luis Borges. It is merely the traditional pattern that has been examined here - the pattern of an invented landscape in which tales of warfare, quest and adventure take place and sorcery is a fact of life. This is, perhaps, to impose an artificial limitation on the genre; to think in terms of independent worlds and those that can be reached from here is to impose another. We have seen how the links between the two kinds of world may be handled at times without conviction and how, conversely, the degree of independence may be debatable. Independent worlds are created in the mirror of our reality, while on the other hand it is not necessary for a phantasy world to be accessible from here. All that is needed is a sympathetic character with whom the reader can identify and a frame of reference that employs elements of the familiar to throw the phantasy into high relief. Essentially



phantasy worlds are moral worlds, or at least worlds in which there are moral dilemmas that we can recognise; actual traffic between them and us is irrelevant. And so, although the literature of phantasy is set, to borrow Dunsany's evocative phrase "beyond the fields we know", it finds its ultimate beginnings on this side of those enchanted fields.

Dark Goddess: An Appreciation Of Nico

Peter J. Relton

The Marble index of a mind forever voyaging
on strange seas of thought, alone.

THE SINGER/COMPOSER Nico, I feel, deserves to be ranked among the great 20th century fantasists: In this article I hope to show why.

The quotation above is taken from Wordsworth's Prelude. He was referring to a statue of Newton, but the lines form an important key to an understanding of Nico's music: she called her first self-composed album The Marble Index.

Born Chrissta Paffgen, Cologne c. 1940, in 1946 she was taken to Berlin. Seeing all the destruction as a little girl had a profound effect on her - she has spoken of a strong attraction towards places that have an atmosphere of devastation and abandonment. Perhaps there is a connection between her childhood in a defeated Germany and her desire to have no home of her own, preferring to live in hotels and the homes of friends. Certainly she seems to have been an inveterate traveller from an early age. Before making any records she had a fairly successful international career as a fair-haired model and actress. She attended the same New York acting class as Marilyn Monroe and had a small but notable role in Fellini's film, La Dolce Vita. By the early 1960's she was working in a New York club, singing such songs as My Funny Valentine - very different from her later work - to an audience which included Salvador Dali. In 1965 she recorded a British single, which flopped despite several appearances on the T.V. programme, Ready, Steady, Go. After that she joined Andy Warhol's Factory, appearing in several of his films, including Chelsea Girls.

Around the same time she encountered the rock group The Velvet Underground, led

by Lou Reed. They were to have little commercial success, and disbanded in the early 1970's, but their music became one of the primary influences on 70's rock, inspiring such talents as David Bowie, Roxy Music and, more recently, the New Wave bands.

Nico and the Velvets teamed up, under Warhol's patronage, for an American tour and a first album, which was released in 1967. Nico sang lead vocals on three of that album's songs, before leaving to pursue a solo career.

Her first solo album was Chelsea Girl (1967). It contained songs written for her by Lou Reed, John Cale (another member of the Velvets), the sixteen year old Jackson Browne and even Bob Dylan; the last two being numbered among Nico's lovers. The Cale lyrics come closest to the type of material Nico herself was later to write. They are bleak, strange songs of death, destruction and beauty. There is also a track called It was a Pleasure Then, which contains more than a hint of what was to come in the monumental album to follow. Credited to Nico/Cale/Reed, this song was Nico's first attempt at writing lyrics. She sings over a backing of almost random electric guitar sounds, which gradually become more and more loud and discordant. The contrast between that discord and the strange beauty of her voice creates an uncanny effect. The album as a whole, however, is marred by the gross, unsubtle use of lush strings, which work directly against the bleak mood of the songs.

In 1969 came The Marble Index. No longer a blonde beauty, Nico stares out from the cover of the album like a dark-

haired lamia, her smile hinting at a knowledge of strange mysteries. She had discovered she could compose her own dark songs and had a producer who understood her music - John Cale.

The album opens with the brief instrumental Prelude. Sparse piano chords and faint, tinkling bells create a mood of yearning beauty; then the menacing strains of Nico's Indian Harmonium intrude, leading into Lawns of Dawns. Nico's voice is extraordinary. Deep and powerful, it has a weird, alien quality which is emphasised by her strong German accent; yet at the same time it has a wistful vulnerability. Her very first words, "can you follow me?", carry faint echoes of the image conjured by the Wordsworth quotation, of a wanderer through vistas of the imagination. Lawns of Dawns concerns a mind veering towards insanity, whose nights are dominated by fear of the approaching dawn. Its chilling horror neatly destroys the comforting beauty of the previous short track. Her songs are unique. They have both simplicity and pro-

found psychological depth, in their use of archetypal symbols and themes. In this they resemble true myth.

On Facing the Wind, the wind both imprisons the self and constantly buffets it, allowing it no rest. The search for identity and meaning ends in futility. The music here brilliantly echoes the mood of the lyrics; Cale's production is superb. Chaotic and always changing, instruments appear and disappear almost at random. Yet there is a constant rushing rhythm.

First on side two is the oddly titled Julius Caesar (Memento Hodie), which is a dirge, lamenting the death of Julius but full of unearthly imagery - forbidden fruit, the winds of Aeolus, lost cities in the sea - which make the song a much more universal and ambiguous statement.

Frozen Warnings has a very sparse instrumental backing and a lovely melody, focusing attention more completely on the alien beauty of Nico's voice. More than any other song, save for the final track, it evokes visions of eerie landscapes, cold and desolate.

Finally comes Evening of Light, which I think is the finest thing she has ever done. The technique used on the previous album's It Was a Pleasure Then is repeated, with even greater success. The musical background builds up from a faint beginning to an incredible chaotic complexity. The lyrics, with their fantastic doom-laden imagery, are sung in a series of short repeated phrases rather than in continuous verse. The effect is apocalyptic and harshly beautiful. Nico succeeds in creating a mood of fantasy more completely than anyone else in contemporary music and that includes Tangerine Dream in their heyday.

After the album was made there was a bizarre incident in the lobby of New York's Chelsea Hotel (where the film, Chelsea Girls was made; and the scene of the Sid Vicious tragedy) when Nico attacked a Black Panther leader's girl friend with a bottle. Subsequently Nico fled America for Paris, where she has lived most often during the last decade.

In 1971 her next album, Desertshore, was released, which revealed a different facet of her talent. The Gothic sound of the harmonium begins the opening track, Janitor of Lunacy. Nico's voice is in



superb form, as ever; her first note is devastating. This song is closest in mood to the previous album overall.

Completing the progression from horror to delicate fantasy on side one of the album is Le Petit Chevalier, a short, remarkable track which intensifies the timeless beauty of the previous song, My Only Child. The lyrics are in French and are sung to a deceptively simple tune not by Nico but by a child (Nico's son?) accompanied by harpsicord.

Side two commences with Abschied, sung by Nico in her native German. Excellent doomy stuff with some nice interplay between John Cale's viola and Nico's harmonium. The piano is the main instrument on Affraid; a much gentler piece, almost a love song. Then comes Mutterlein - more dark weirdness with German lyrics. The final song is All That Is My Own. The music has an Egyptian atmosphere. Sections of the lyrics are spoken rather than sung, to great effect. Among the spoken lines are the following, which convey particularly well the sense of mystery and wonder to be found throughout her music:

"He who knows may pass on to the
world unknown
And meet me on the desert shore."

The album as a whole is much more easy to listen to than The Marble Index. The music and lyrics evoke the gentler vistas of the desert, rather than harsh, icy wastes. Horror is still present, but not overpoweringly so and it is the ideal introduction to Nico.

Desertshore coincided with her role in the film La Cicatrice Interieure by the French film director Philippe Garrel, portions of which were made in Egypt. The cover photographs were taken from this film, as were the songs Abschied and Mutterlein. She has appeared in a number of Garrel films, by the way, none of which as far as I know have ever been shown in Britain, even by film societies. It was after the Desertshore album that the English rock singer and composer Kevin Ayres became a devotee of Nico. He wrote an excellent song about her called Decadence, which identifies her as a second Marlene Dietrich with some, though not total, validity.

Ayres and Nico did several concerts together, including one which was recorded for an album in 1974. This concert also featured Eno and John Cale. The second

half was devoted to Ayres' music and in the first half the other three artists each had solo spots. Nico sang the Doors' song The End with Eno's synthesiser accompanying her harmonium. (Cale's contribution, incidentally, was a version of Elvis Presley's Heartbreak Hotel, transforming it into a song of nightmarish horror and despair.) Nico also sang with



Ayres on one of his albums, The Confessions of Doctor Dream, though afterwards she said she was disappointed at the way it turned out - both Ayres' and Nico's vocals were distorted almost beyond recognition.

Her last album to date appeared a few months after the Ayres concert. The End is inferior to The Marble Index and Desertshore. The title track is a very different version of the song she performed live. There is also Nico's rendering of Das Lied Der Deutschen - better known as Deutschland Uber Alles!

The album does contain some of Nico's best songs, however, most notably Valley of the Kings and Secret Side, and the atmosphere of strange, doomy wonder remains as strong as ever. I think its overall failure lies primarily in the fact that it isn't as brilliantly original as the two previous albums, falling half way between the harshness of The Marble Index and the comparatively lighter mood of Desertshore. In addition, the inclusion of non-Nico songs prevents the album from having such a tightly-knit structure; one of the most impressive aspects of her other albums was the way all the songs fitted together to form a complete cycle.

For the first time since the John Cale songs on Chelsea Girl images of phys-

ical violence appear. An important image is the dark, masculine, threatening yet compelling figure of the killer mentioned in the Doors' song, The End, which recurs in Valley of the Kings; a similar figure appears in Innocent and Vain. The menacing title track actually fits remarkably well into her repertoire. Nico has said that she regards herself as a 'soul sister' to Jim Morrison, the leader of the Doors, who died in 1971. But at the same time it remains recognisably a Doors song, with its 20th century imagery. The imagery of Nico's own songs is almost always timeless. After The End she declared that she no longer wanted John Cale to produce her. It seems she was particularly unhappy with Cale's messy arrangement of the title track and preferred the simpler, live version.

Nothing further was heard from her in Britain until 1978, when she returned from France to give a number of concerts both here and in the U.S. She performs alone, unaccompanied save for her Indian Harmonium, on which she plays simple rhythms which complement her magnificent voice perfectly. It is remarkable how her appearance matches her music. The dark, enigmatic figure of Nico herself has a mythic quality. It is the figure of a Dark Goddess. Tall, slim, black clad; the long dark hair and most of all the expressive face, possessed of an unearthly beauty still.

In performance her features portray the deep despair of some of her songs;

yet between numbers her face relaxes, her patter reveals a ready wit. Audience reaction tends to be mixed. The first concert I attended ended in mid-song with half a dozen plastic beer glasses being hurled at her. But Nico has said that to her a totally good audience reaction would be a failure. Mass popularity too often means that an artist makes compromises instead of pursuing his or her artistic vision to its limits.

She introduces most of her songs by dedicating them to various people, which does not mean that she always admires the dedicatees - such as Andy Warhol, the explorer Henry Hudson, Andreas Baader and Richard Nixon. These introductions give the songs an anchor in reality, while at the same time a mundane subject takes on a new ambiguity, transformed into something fantastic.

Nico's new album should be available by the time you read this. It is scheduled for release in June, on the Aura label. She is backed by rock musicians, though not apparently by the surviving Doors. It is hard to explain why she didn't record it back in 1978 - she certainly had some difficulty obtaining a record contract, but that isn't the whole answer. Nico seems to alternate between long periods of inactivity and shorter bursts of creativity. Live dates have been promised to coincide with the album's release. I just hope the present creative outburst lasts a long time. Maybe Nico will be a commercial success this time around!

DARK HORIZONS 23, Summer 1981

Editorial address: DAVID SUTTON, 194 STATION ROAD, KINGS HEATH, BIRMINGHAM B14 7TE, ENGLAND. The contents of this publication are copyright to the individual authors or artists concerned, and may not be reproduced without their permission. © 1981

Articles, artwork, letters of comment and fiction are welcomed, but must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope in all cases where return is required. Letters not for publication should be so marked. Every care will be taken with material while it is in my possession, but responsibility cannot be taken for loss or damage otherwise. Payment for acceptances will be in the form of two complimentary copies of the relevant issue of DARK HORIZONS.

Members of the BFS receive DARK HORIZONS as part of their annual subscription. To join the society, please see details on back cover

Words Of Magic

Peter Bayliss



WE ARE OFTEN warned "not to speak ill of the dead" (de mortuis nil nisi bonum), not only out of respect but for fear of raising their ghosts. If we are talking about someone and he or she appears, the expression used is, "talk of the devil and he'll appear". In both these cases we unconsciously acknowledge one of the oldest ideas known to magic - that words, especially names, possess a strange power to influence things in the natural world and beyond.

Popular examples of this are to be found in the traditional sayings and rhymes of folklore. There are many, for instance, concerning the prediction of a future husband for a young girl.

To guarantee a dream of her future love on Hallowe'en, a girl could place her shoes in the form of a 'T', a potent talisman representing the hammer of the Scandinavian god Thor. She then said, "Hoping this night for my true love to see, I place my shoes in the form of a T". Also at Hallowe'en a popular game was to line

a hot grate with hazel nuts, giving each the name of a prospective husband, and reciting "If you love me pop and fly; if you hate me, burn and die".

Hoping for a vision of her future husband on St. Thomas's Eve (20th December), a girl would peel a large onion at bedtime, stick nine pins in it, and then chant, "Good St. Thomas, do me right; send me my true love this night".

Saying the right words was as important in the treatment of many ailments as taking the right medicine. Herb women used to treat scalds with bramble leaves dipped in spring water, chanting as they dressed the wounds:

"There came three ladies out of
the East,
One with fire and two with frost.
Out with fire, in with frost."

To cure a nosebleed, Orkney islanders repeated:

"Three Virgins came over Jordan's
Land
Each with a bloody knife in her
hand.
Stem blood, stem, letherly stand.
Bloody nose in God's name mend."

People were often more interested in the shape of letters and words than in their meaning; hence the supposed magical properties of palindromes and word squares, the most famous of all word squares being the 'Sator' formula:

S A T O R
A R E P O
T E N E T
O P E R A
R O T A S

Its origin and meaning are uncertain, although it is known to have survived from ancient times. According to one source, the 'Sator' square will give you, by magic, anything you want. It is necessary to write the formula on parchment with the blood of a pigeon "... and bear it in

thy left hand and ask what thou wilt and thou shalt have it". A copy can be seen in Cirencester Museum, Gloucestershire, scratched on lead.

A word that magicians love to use, 'Abracadabra', is a similar illustration of this. There are various explanations of its meaning, but its true significance would seem to be, like magic squares, in its visual appeal:

```

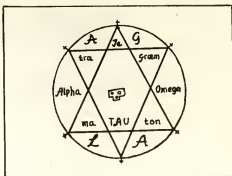
A B R A C A D A B R A
A B R A C A D A B R
A B R A C A D A B
A B R A C A D A
A B R A C A D
A B R A C A
A B R A C
A B R A
A B R
A B
A

```

It was attributed with the power to cure all types of ailment. The letters were to be written in a triangle and worn around a patient's neck; as the lines diminish, so does the illness.

One reason for a belief in the power of words is that, at a time when the majority of people were illiterate, a man who could read and write was held in awe. So the written word itself became a powerful talisman.

There is a story from the 17th century about how Chief Justice Holt had an old woman brought before him accused of being a witch because she possessed such a written 'charm'. When he asked to see the piece of paper in question, he was startled to discover that the writing was his own! Apparently, the woman had been his landlady when he was an undergraduate and, being short of money, he had once



scribbled a few inconsequential words of Latin on a scrap of paper and given it to her in lieu of rent - as a 'charm' to cure her sick daughter. Needless to say, the poor woman was acquitted, and in fact it was Chief Justice Holt who set a precedent for other judges in the acquittal of many so-called witches.

Another reason for a belief in the power of words comes from the Bible. The Book of Genesis describes how God created the world by the speaking of words: "God said, let there be light; and there was light". Eliphas Levi, the great 19th century French occultist, once said "In magic to have said is to have done..."

Words have an important place in the practice of meditation. The rhythmical chanting of a particular word or phrase, known as a mantra, helps to clear the mind and aids concentration. ('Mantra' is a Sanskrit term meaning an incantation made up of a sacred formula, usually a quotation from the Vedas, the holy literature of Hinduism). Israel Regardie, in *The Tree of Life*, likens its action on the brain "... to that of a swiftly revolving wheel through the spokes of which no object can pass". The effect is therefore more important than the meaning, and it is nowadays believed that any word or sentence may be used as a mantra and that each individual may find a particular one to suit him.

According to magical theory, the 'real' name of something contains the essence or a part of the life-force of that thing. Therefore, the name of a person can be used as a medium through which a magician can channel good or bad influences onto that same person. However, certain names also possess value as a sort of catalyst in magical operations,



and such names are known as 'names of power'.

These are usually the different names of God, felt to have an inherent power. They are mostly of Hebrew origin and come from the Old Testament, names such as EL, ELOHIM, ELOA, SABAOth, SHADDAI, ADONAI, JEHOVAH, YAH and EHYEH. From the Latin we also get ALPHA and OMEGA (the beginning and the end), whereas another powerful name, AGLA, is derived from the initial letters of the Hebrew phrase 'Aieth Gadol Leolam Adonai', meaning 'Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord'.

The ancient grimoires, or magical textbooks, are full of incantations that call upon 'names of power' to make them more effective: "In the name of ADONAI ELOHIM TZABAOth SHADDAI, Lord God of Armies Almighty, may we successfully perform the work of our hands, and may the Lord be present with us in our heart and in our lips". However, despite their pious tone, many of the grimoires' operations were of not so virtuous intent. But as Richard Cavendish says in his book *The Black Arts*, "using this name turns on this power automatically, in the same way that pressing the light switch turns on the light".

As well as these divine names are others termed 'barbarous'. They may be of Egyptian, Chaldean or Assyrian origin, but have become unintelligible through countless translations. The following example is from the Dee conjurations:

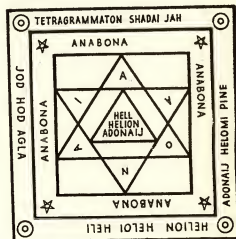
"Eca, zodocare, Iad, goho. Torzodu odo kikale qaa! Zodocare od zodameranul Zodorje, lape zodiredo Ol Noco Mada, das Iadapiel! Ilas! Hoatahe Iaida!"

It must be remembered that the magician aimed to work himself up into an almost trance-like state, using drugs and incense and impressive sounding words, in which his mind would be receptive to whatever forces he was trying to evoke. Says Israel Regardie, "... the numbers of barbaric, formidable, and almost fearful-appearing words rolling and bellowing through so many of the better invocations which have come down from antiquity should have an exhilarating effect on the consciousness, and exalt it to the pitch required in magic".

Of all divine 'names of power' the Tetragrammaton, or name of four letters, is supposed to be the most powerful. The

four letters are YHWH (Yod He Vau He), and it is the name which appears as JEH-OVAH in many versions of the Bible. "I Am That I Am", said God to Moses at the burning bush, and in fact the Tetragrammaton is a variation of this, i.e. of the verb 'to be' (He Vau He). Most modern scholars pronounce it as YAHWEH, but the real secret lies in the correct pronunciation.

One of the greatest quests of the magician is to find the 'real' name of God and how to pronounce it. It is believed that he who knows this secret possesses absolute power, because at the vibration set up by the sound of that Name the universe itself will come to an end.



Acknowledgments

Steve Jones and Jo Fletcher, for illustrative material, proofreading and advice.

Carl Hiles for reproducing film stills and book covers in a form suitable for printing.

Alan Hunter and Dave Carson, for providing artwork to meet my deadline.

Alan Jones for the loan of stills from his private collection.

Sandra Sutton, for her patience during a laborious week of production.

And of course, to anyone I may have inadvertently forgotten - thanks!

Moorcock Memorabilia

Andrew Darlington



IN THE MOORCOCK edited *New Worlds*, number 151, James Colvin (a Moorcock alias) reviewed *Warriors of Mars*, the first volume of a trilogy by Edward P. Bradbury (another Moorcock alias!). Such literary incest obscures the origins of a Martian trilogy written between April and August 1965, which seems to have been pure hack-work to generate finance for other, more respectable literary projects. As such it has little to do with the main development of Moorcock's work. But there are tangible reference points; inevitably the hero, Michael Kane, is later destined to join the roll-call of Eternal Champion incarnations.

Colvin opined that the book was, "scarcely modern in style or content" - and links with the past sprawl back at least as far as the young Moorcock editing his *Burroughsiana* fanzine, and churning out his Sojan adventures for *Tarzan Monthly*. In fact, one of the stories used in *Tarzan Monthly*, called *Dek of Noothar*, could provide a further link. Like the Kane novels, it is set on Burroughsian Mars and, like the later Elric stories, it features a 'Sword of Life'. (The story is now available as part of a Sojan collection published by Savoy Books).

'Bradbury's' introductory notes to *Warriors of Mars* relate how he first met the American scientist Michael Kane during a "warm and bright and soporific" summer in Nice. The notes, although dated April 1965 in the original Compact Books edition (1969 in a later New English Library re-issue) are, as Colvin suggests, written in a deliberately antiquated style. Kane relates the details of his first arrival on Mars, how he defends the city of Varnal from attack by the Blue Giants and how he eventually pursues these would-be invaders to their cavernous city "beneath the mountains" to destroy the N'aal-Beast and with it the power of their evil leader Horguhl.

Colvin hazards that the book was influenced by Edgar Rice Burroughs - "but is actually more readable". The last point is debatable; the former inescapable. The similarity of the initials of both writers, E.P.B. and E.R.B., supports the proposition. The dedication, to Burroughs and H. G. Wells, provides its final confirmation.

Burroughs' hero, John Carter, escapes from unfriendly Apache Indians in Arizona through a combination of teleportation and sorcery, to find himself on the plains of Mars (Barsoom), where he reaches the city

of Helium, its swordsmen, its Jeddak and its beautiful princess, Dejah Thoris. Michael Kane escapes from a Chicago research centre through a malfunctioning matter-transmitter, to find himself on ancient Mars (Vashu), where he reaches the city of Varnal of the Green Mist, its swordsmen, its Bradhinak and its beautiful princess, Shizala.

In Moorcock's second Martian volume, Blades of Mars, Kane returns to Varnal financed by Bradbury. Once there he discovers the lost underground city of the technologically advanced Yaksha, helps to win a revolution, and fights spider-creatures before he finally finds Shizala again and marries her. While the third book, Barbarians of Mars, tells how he again utilises the machines of the extinct Yaksha to defeat a plague of Green Death and a subsequent dogma followed by its machine-like victims. Kane's Martian Oddsey's bring him into conflict with all manner of Dogmen, Cat People and Winged Men; although, unlike Moorcock's concurrent Elric and Dorian Hawkmoon novels, there are no metaphysical entities.

Kane, who learned his fencing skill from and eccentric White Russian emigreé, relates his stories to Bradbury in the first person, just as the U.S. army-trained Carter relates his adventures to Burroughs. But like all imitations (and Burroughs' Martian novels are already much

imitated), the Moorcock/Bradbury trilogy lacks whatever undefinable charm is the most distinctive about the original. Indeed, often Bradbury's writing is more clumsy and less imaginative than his predecessor. Moorcock's hero is chivalrously dour, morally two-dimensional. He is given to terrible utterances like "Shizala, loving me with a deep and abiding love which I fully reciprocated". He is also given to much narcissistic preening in which he relates how he is admired by the Martian warriors, by the hand-maidens and by virtually everyone else he comes into contact with. Probably such exaggeration is intended as pastiche, a humorously affectionate, gently mocking tribute.

For a number of years the trilogy languished out of print - the object of many devotees' quest through junk shops and market stalls - until it was eventually salvaged from the defunct Compact imprint by New English Library. For the re-issues, under Moorcock's own name, you lose the quirky original Jim Cawthorn illustration and gain technically better, but perhaps less evocatively effective covers.

Colvin closed his original review with the comment that "if you are a Burroughs fan you are bound to like this novel - it is quite as good as anything by the Old Master. Which isn't saying much from me". Perhaps there is little more to add.

EDITORIAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

I re-wrote the introduction more in keeping with a general article on Le Fanu's fiction and submitted it elsewhere, but it remained idle. Its publication here shows that even traditional writers can be worth re-examining at length. It may prompt a series of articles on ghost and horror writers in the British tradition?

The piece of fiction in this issue is by Tom Licotti. Tom lives in Michigan and has been working as an editor on a series entitled Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, an anthology of excerpts from the criticism of authors who died between 1900 and 1960. Volume 4 contains a section on H. P. Lovecraft, which Tom edited and for which he wrote a brief introduction. His stories are beginning to appear here in the U.K. (Both Fantasy Tales and Fantasy Macabre hold examples of his excellent work). The story herewith is a particular-

ly good example of the kind of fiction I will be looking for and using in DH - yarns with an unusual, bizarre, stimulating plot or style.

Other contributors are, Andrew J. Wilson from Birmingham, who is a skillful storyteller, but here contributing a piece exploring links between fantasy and reality. Peter Relton of Bradford discusses the fantasy creations of singer/songwriter Nico and Peter Bayliss from Rugby reveals the symbolism of words in Magick in a brief introductory article. Finally Andrew Darlington from Ossett contributes a piece of Moorcockian ephemera.

Next issue I hope to continue to provide an interesting and useful DH and, if you are willing to make a contribution, either article, fiction or artwork, please do so - DH will thrive on diversity.



THE BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY

Michael Moorcock, Robert E. Howard, Tanith Lee, J.R.R. Tolkien, Ramsey Campbell, Stephen King, H.P. Lovecraft... Are these authors included in your repertoire? Do you enjoy films like *SUPERMAN*, *CLASH OF THE TITANS*, *ALIEN*, *STAR WARS*, *THE SHINING*, *HALLOWEEN*? If so, the **BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY** is aimed at you! The B.F.S. publishes a regular **BULLETIN** crammed full of News and Reviews on these and other authors and films, plus up-to-date information on forthcoming books and events in the fantasy world.

The Society also publishes a magazine, **DARK HORIZONS**, packed with articles, interviews and fiction. The magazine, like the **BULLETIN**, is fully illustrated with some of the finest artwork around.

Besides these, the B.F.S. publishes occasional, limited **BOOKLETS** for the devotee of fantasy and horror.

And if you write fantasy or horror fiction, the B.F.S. provides a system called **FANTASYPPOOL**, where you can have your work commented upon by a panel of expert critics. The B.F.S. also runs a **LIBRARY**, from which you can borrow a variety of small press SF and fantasy magazines.

The B.F.S. sponsors the **BRITISH FANTASY AWARDS**; presented annually, past winners of this prestigious award have included Fritz Leiber, Michael Moorcock, Tanith Lee, Piers Anthony and Stephen Donaldson.

Membership is only £5.00 or \$15.00 per annum. Please send cheques and postal orders made payable to **THE BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY** to:

Rob Butterworth,
79 Rochdale Road,
Milnrow, Rochdale,
Lanes., OL16 4DT, U.K.

Paul Ritz,
P.O. Box 6485,
Cleveland,
Ohio 44101, U.S.A.

AMAZING STORIES

APRIL
25 Cents



**A
COSMIC
JUKEBOX
SCAN**